

Missouri Comprehensive School Counseling Program

A Manual for Program Development, Implementation,
Evaluation and Enhancement

Original Committee (1986)

Norman C. Gysbers
University of Missouri-Columbia

J. Bragg Stanley
Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education

Lela Kosteck-Bunch
Missouri School Counselor Association

Carolyn S. Magnuson
Lincoln University

Marion F. Starr
Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education

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A thank you to all school counselors, counselor educators, and writing team members who have given of their time and talents to review and update the MCSCP manual.

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Margaret M. Vandeven, Ph.D. • Commissioner of Education

205 Jefferson Street, P.O. Box 480 • Jefferson City, MO 65102-0480 • dese.mo.gov

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Dear School Counselors:

The Department of Elementary and Secondary Education is pleased to provide you with the latest edition of the Missouri Comprehensive School Counseling Program Manual. This information provides counselors, counselor educators and administrators with guidelines for program implementation that are necessary to deliver the best possible school based counseling services to students.

School counseling programs play a vital role in the educational process and learning environment of students in Missouri schools. The program is designed to address the social/emotional, academic and career development of all students in their pursuit of successful school and work experiences. This is a critically important program for our Missouri students.

We hope you find the information in this manual easy to follow and useful. Thank you for everything you do to ensure the social/emotional, academic and career development of your students through your comprehensive school counseling program.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Margie Vandeven". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Margie Vandeven
Commissioner of Education

Phone 573-751-4446 • Fax 573-751-1179 • commissioner@dese.mo.gov

MISSOURI COMPREHENSIVE SCHOOL COUNSELING PROGRAM MANUAL

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PREFACE

In response to societal and individual challenges, the State of Missouri is continuing efforts that began in the 1980s to reform and improve education including counseling in schools. For school counseling, the reform and improvement process has required a re-conceptualization of school counseling from a position/services orientation to a comprehensive school counseling program firmly grounded in principles of human growth and development — a program that is an integral part of the educational process with a content-based curriculum (specific knowledge and skills) of its own. What began in the 1940s in Missouri as a position orientation with individuals filling positions and providing school counseling services has now become a comprehensive program that is an equal partner with other programs in education.

Fundamental Truths of School Counseling

The re-conceptualization of school counseling that has occurred in Missouri and across the country is based on six premises that reinforce the organization and management of comprehensive school counseling programs. These premises are as follows:

- 1. School counseling is a program.** Its characteristics are similar to other programs in education and include the following:
 - Student grade level expectations (GLEs)
 - Activities and processes to assist students in achieving these GLEs
 - Professionally certified personnel
 - Materials and resources
 - Program, personnel, and results evaluations
- 2. School counseling programs are developmental and comprehensive.** School counseling activities are developmental and conducted on a regular, planned, and systematic basis to assist students in achieving school counseling related grade level expectations. Although students' immediate and crisis needs must be met, a major focus of a developmental program is to provide all students with experiences to help them grow and succeed. School counseling programs are comprehensive and include activities and services such as assessment, information, consultation, counseling, referral, placement, follow-up, and follow-through.
- 3. School counseling programs assist all students equitably in completing a rigorous and relevant curriculum and earn a diploma that ensures preparation for multiple opportunities after high school.** This curriculum emphasizes the skills and knowledge to be successful in the workforce or in post-secondary education.
- 4. School counseling programs feature a team approach.** A comprehensive, developmental program of school counseling is based on the assumption that all school staff members are involved. At the same time, it is understood that professionally certified school counselors are central to the program. School counselors provide direct services to students and also work in consultative and collaborative relationships with members of the school counseling team, other school staff members, parents/guardians, mental health professionals and members of the community.
- 5. School counseling programs are developed through a systematic process of planning, designing, implementing, evaluating and enhancing.** This process assures intentional delivery of a program designed to address established priorities.
- 6. School counseling programs have established leadership.** Leadership ensures accountability for the program and for the quality of the performance of program staff.

SECTION I

Program Rationale

History

Since the 1980s, many individuals and groups across the country have been active in seeking educational reform. Unfortunately, many educational reform efforts during the 1980s neglected the field of guidance and counseling. Little was said then about the contributions of guidance and counseling and the work of school counselors to the overall achievement of educational goals. This omission was alarming because “Although counselors are often seen as peripheral to the mainstream of education, they in fact occupy a crucial position. For this reason, efforts to improve the nation’s schools and create a more equitable system require careful consideration of guidance and counseling.” (Hart & Jacobi, 1992, p. 80).

In Missouri, excellence in education has been a long-standing goal. This commitment was reaffirmed in 1993 with the passage of the Outstanding Schools Act. The Act called for a strong and enduring commitment to our public-school system and for the development of a tangible, concise plan to bring about educational reform in Missouri. The commitment to excellence had been reaffirmed through legislation such as the No Child Left Behind Act (PL 107-10) and through the state’s focus on the goals identified at that time in *Race to The Top*.

The state of Missouri has also recognized the important contributions school counselors make to the overall growth and development of students and to excellence in education. This recognition led to the development of the Missouri Comprehensive Guidance and Counseling Program (MCGCP)* in 1984 based on the work of Gysbers and Moore (1975, 1981). The goal of the MCGCP was to refocus and redirect guidance and counseling activities and to develop guidance and counseling and the work of school counselors in the schools within a program structure.

The first version of the MCGCP was designed for use at the secondary level. It was field-tested in selected secondary schools in Missouri from 1984 to 1988. During this time, the development and field-testing processes involved numerous task forces that provided direction concerning the content, structure, and implementation of the MCGCP. While this field-testing was taking place, work also was underway to extend the MCGCP to the elementary school level. Over 300 school counselors and administrators participated in this process. This work was completed by 1988, allowing training on the full K-12 MCGCP to begin in 1988. This initial training ended in 1998. During this time, school counselors and administrators in 441 out of 525 school districts across Missouri received training on how to implement MCGCP in their local school districts. Training for school counselors and administrators continues today through new personnel workshops and comprehensive school counseling in-service workshops conducted yearly across Missouri.

In 2016 the Missouri State Legislature passed House Bill 2428 (Swan) changing the profession’s title from “Guidance Counselor” to “School Counselor”. This title change reflected the comprehensive work done by today’s school counselors. The title change also aligned with the recommendation of the American School Counselor Association that the term “Guidance” be replaced by “School”. Throughout the rest of this guide, MCGCP will be referred to as the Missouri Comprehensive School Counseling Program (MCSCP) based on the name change in 2016. The American School Counselor Association also recommended that “personal/social” be replaced by “social/emotional” to better reflect everyday language and language used in research.

Purpose

The comprehensive school counseling program is an integral part of a school district's total educational program. It is developmental by design and includes sequential activities organized and implemented by school counselors with the active support of parents/guardians, teachers, administrators, and the community. As a developmental program, it addresses the needs of all students by facilitating their social/emotional, academic, and career development, helping create positive and safe learning climates in schools, as well as helping students feel connected to school and to at least one caring adult. At the same time, the program assists students as they face issues and resolve problems that prevent their healthy development.

The purpose of the MCSCP is to provide students in kindergarten through grade 12 with successful educational experiences. When the programs are fully implemented across the state, school districts will have comprehensive school counseling programs in which school counselors will be able to devote themselves full time to the counseling program, thereby reaching 100% of their students and enhancing:

- Student mental health and social/emotional development
- Student academic achievement
- Career development
- A positive and safe learning environment
- Collaboration with parents/guardians, teachers, administrators, and the community
- Accountability through a comprehensive evaluation process

Program Benefits

When comprehensive school counseling programs are fully implemented in local school districts using the MCSCP as a guide, the following benefits can be expected for students, parents/guardians, teachers, communities, boards of education, administrators, and school counselors:

Benefits for Students

- Focuses on all students equitably
- Enhances students' academic performance
- Centers on students' needs
- Seeks students' input
- Encourages more interaction among students
- Provides a developmental and preventative focus
- Promotes knowledge and assistance in career exploration and development
- Enhances life coping skills
- Helps students feel connected to school
- Enhances students' social/emotional development
- Develops decision-making skills
- Increases knowledge of self and others
- Broadens knowledge of our changing work world
- Increases opportunities for school counselor-student interaction
- Develops a system of long-range planning for students

Benefits for Parents/Guardians

- Enhances students' academic performance, and their social/emotional and career development
- Encourages outreach to all parents/guardians
- Provides support for parents/guardians regarding each child's educational development
- Increases opportunities for school counselor interaction
- Encourages input of parents/guardians
- Provides parents/guardians information about available resources
- Assures parents/guardians that all children will receive equitable support from the school counseling program

Benefits for Teachers

- Contributes to a team effort to enhance students' social/emotional, academic, and career development
- Provides relevant curriculum ideas using school counseling grade level expectations
- Establishes the school counselor as a resource/consultant
- Encourages teachers' input into the delivery of the comprehensive school counseling program
- Encourages positive, collaborative working relationships
- Defines the role of school counselors as educators

Benefits for the Board of Education

- Enhances students' social/emotional, academic, and career development
- Encourages greater school-community interaction
- Meets the school counseling standards found in the Missouri School Improvement Program
- Provides a rationale for including a comprehensive school counseling program in a school system
- Provides program information to district patrons
- Provides a basis for determining funding allocations for the program
- Provides ongoing evaluation data concerning the full implementation of the program, the work of school counselors within the program, and the attainment of relevant school counseling student outcomes

Benefits for Administrators

- Enhances students' social/emotional, academic, and career development
- Provides a clearly defined organizational structure for the comprehensive school counseling program
- Establishes a clearly defined job description for school counselors
- Provides a way to supervise and evaluate school counselors
- Encourages administrative input and involvement in the implementation and evaluation of the comprehensive school counseling program
- Provides the way to meet Missouri School Improvement Program standards for school counseling
- Provides a means of accountability through comprehensive school counseling program, personnel, and results evaluations
- Enhances the image of the comprehensive school counseling program in the school and community
- Promotes the work of school counselors as providers of direct services to students and parents, as well as being a consultant and collaborator with teachers and administrators

Benefits for the Community

- Encourages input from business, industry, labor, and other community partners including community mental health and social service agencies
- Increases opportunities for collaboration among school counselors and business, industry, labor, and other community partners including community mental health and social service agencies
- Enhances the role of the school counselor as a resource person
- Facilitates the development of students as active responsible citizens
- Increases opportunities for business, industry, labor, and other community partners including community mental health and social service agencies to actively participate in the total school program
- Enhances students' academic performance as well as their social/emotional and career development
- Supplies a future workforce that has decision-making skills, pre-employment skills, and increased worker maturity

Benefits for School Counselors

- Enhances students' academic performance as well as their social/emotional and career development
- Places school counseling in the mainstream of the total educational system
- Provides clearly defined organizational structure
- Reduces and strives to eliminate non-school counseling tasks
- Offers the opportunity to reach all students equitably
- Provides a systematic way to plan, design, implement, evaluate, and enhance the district's comprehensive school counseling program
- Outlines clearly defined responsibilities for helping students master school counseling content, develop Individual Career and Academic Plans, and assisting students with their individual concerns
- Provides the way to meet school counseling program standards found in the Missouri School Improvement Program

Data Support

Missouri comprehensive school counseling programs— implemented by school counselors, in collaboration with parents/guardians, teachers, and administrators— are effective in assisting students to respond to challenges of living and working in the 21st century. Empirical research conducted in the state of Missouri has shown that when school counselors have the time, resources, and structure of a comprehensive school counseling program in which to work, they contribute to positive student social/emotional, academic, and career development as well as to the development of positive and safe learning climates in schools.

Per Lapan, Gysbers & Sun (1997), 22,964 students in 236 small-, medium-, and large-sized high schools in Missouri with fully implemented school counseling programs, as judged by school counselors, reported the following:

- They earned higher grades.
- They were better prepared for the future.
- Their schools had a more positive climate.

Missouri school counselors who rated their programs as more fully implemented also indicated they were more visible and spent more time with students, parents/guardians and teachers (Gysbers, Lapan, & Blair, 1999).

Lapan, Gysbers & Petroski (2001) found 7th graders in Missouri middle schools with more fully implemented comprehensive guidance programs reported:

- They earned higher grades.
- School was more relevant for them.
- They had positive relationships with teachers.
- They were more satisfied with their education.
- They felt safer in school.

In a state-wide study by Lapan, Gysbers, and Kayson (2007), the degree of implementation of comprehensive school counseling programs was compared with relevant student outcomes such as achievement and attendance. Schools which had more fully implemented guidance and counseling programs had:

- Higher Missouri Assessment Program (MAP) scores
- Better attendance
- Fewer discipline problems
- Less school counselor time spent engaged in non-guidance activities

SECTION II

Overview

The organizational framework of the Missouri Comprehensive School Counseling Program (MCSCP) consists of a content and implementation system.

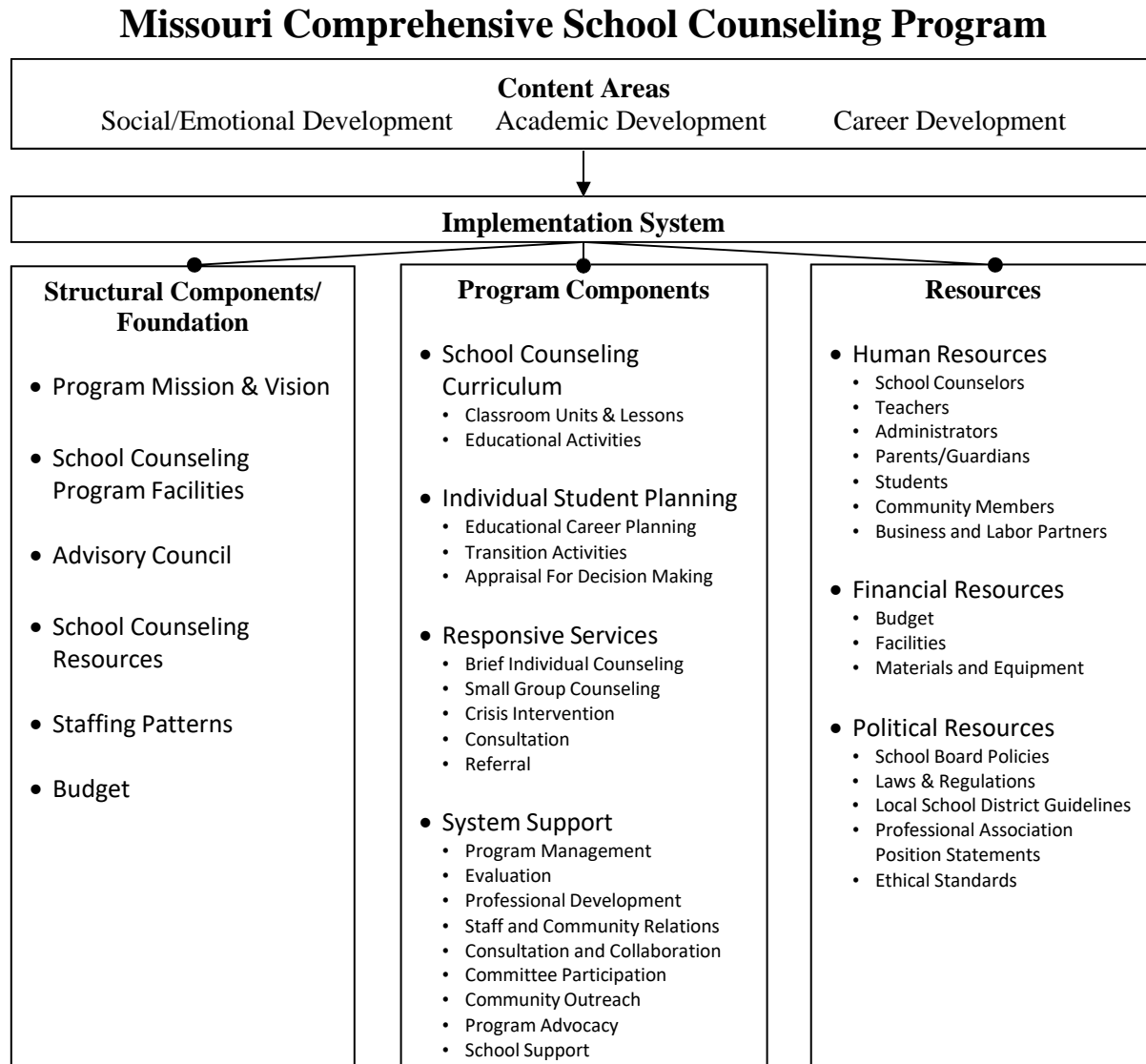


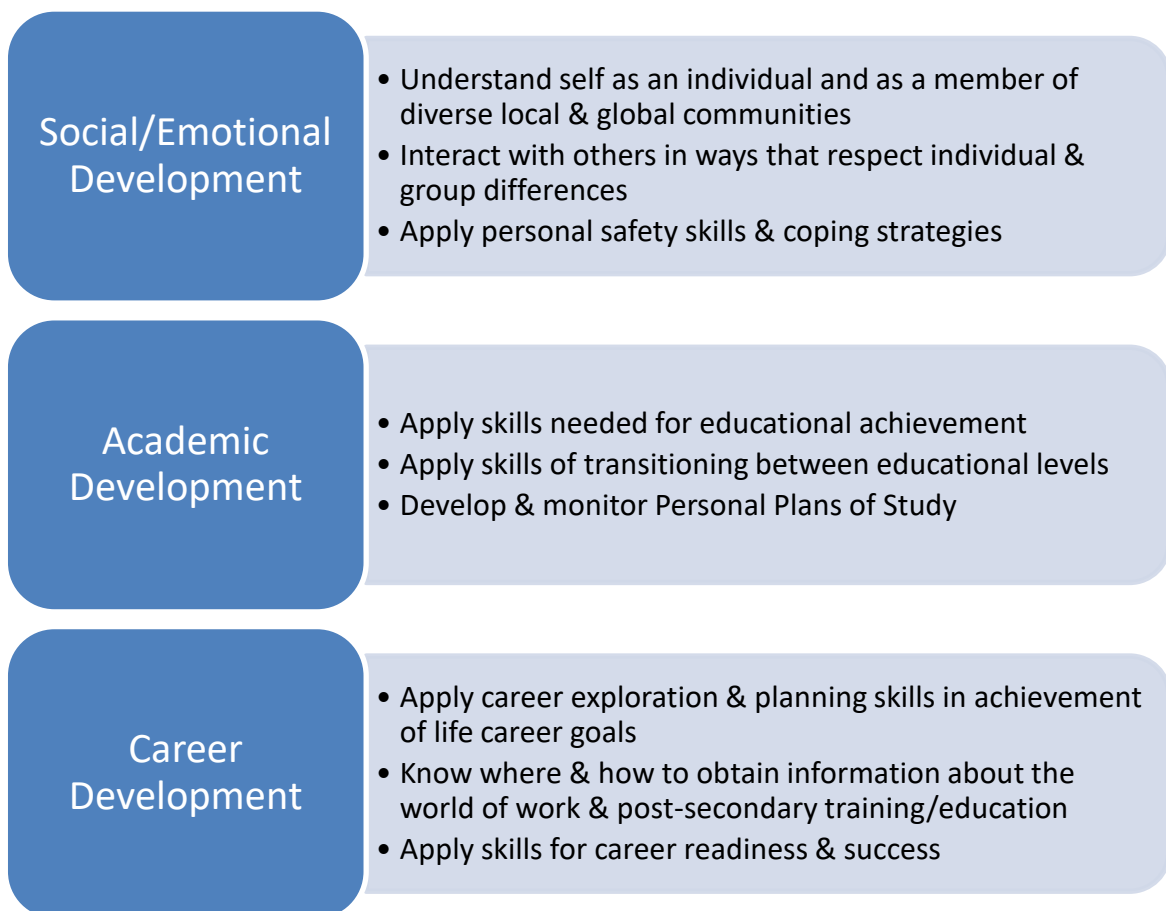
Figure 1

MCSCP Content

The MCSCP is based on the assumption all students should have the opportunity to participate in learning activities that develop social/emotional, academic, and career readiness. In the MCSCP, school counseling content is defined by Grade- Level Expectations (GLEs). In conjunction with other content area GLEs, mastery of the school counseling GLEs prepares students for success in an internationally competitive and technological world. Detailed information about GLEs and the content area strands is available on the Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education School Counseling webpage.

Content Area Strands

The MCSCP Grade Level Expectations are grouped into three content area strands: Social/Emotional, Academic Development, and Career Development.



MCSCP Implementation System

The MCSCP implementation system contains the structural foundations, program components, and suggested distributions of school counselor's time.

Structural Components/Foundations

The structural components/foundations of the MCSCP are: mission and vision, school counseling program facilities, advisory council, school counseling resources, staffing patterns, and budget. The structural foundations are important to the delivery system of the MCSCP because they define the program, describe the rationale and highlight the resources, materials, staffing, and equipment that are required to develop and manage the program's effectiveness.

Mission and Vision

The mission of a comprehensive school counseling program should recognize the significance of school counseling in education and describe the knowledge and skills students will master as a result of their participation in the program. It also should identify who delivers the program and how the program is organized. The district's vision statement for its comprehensive school counseling program should outline a belief system that is derived from the educational goals of the school/school district and the state of Missouri.

Program Facilities

To implement a comprehensive school counseling program, a school counseling center should be established in each school building within the district. The school counseling center should be accessible and large enough to adequately house all the program's personnel, resources, and equipment. The minimum requirements for a school counseling center are:

- A well-organized display of school counseling resource materials and equipment
- Private offices, properly equipped and soundproofed
- Adequate space for individual, small/large-group use
- Adequate storage space

Program Advisory Council

The advisory council (vital to program management and evaluation) provides support, offers advice, reviews the current status and priorities of the district program, and encourages further development to prioritize the goals of a school district's comprehensive school counseling program. Advisory council membership should include a variety of stakeholders such as: parents/guardians, school board members, students, community leaders, agency personnel, and teachers. The advisory council members should have a shared enthusiasm for students and school counseling. The council may be organized at the district or building level. For optimal effectiveness, it is recommended the council meet at least two times per year.

Program Resources

To develop and manage a comprehensive school counseling program effectively, appropriate school counseling resources are required. These resources may include equipment and materials, professional development, and community partnerships. Every school counseling program should have a budget to manage necessary resources.

Program Staffing Patterns

For a comprehensive school counseling program to function fully and effectively, adequate staffing is required. This means that the minimum state standard for school counselor-to-student ratio must be met. In MSIP 6, the minimum standard requires one school counselor for every 201-250 students in grades K-12. However, the desirable standard is one school counselor for every 161-200 students in grades K-12. If a school/district has more than one school counselor, a lead school counselor/director should be identified to provide coordination for the program. This leadership ensures that program planning, design, implementation, evaluation, and enhancement take place in a timely manner. A reduced caseload is highly recommended for lead school counselors or directors so the comprehensive school counseling program can be managed effectively. In large districts, the role of director/coordinator may be a full-time position. Finally, and most importantly, adequate clerical support personnel must be assigned to the school counseling program to ensure that non-school counseling tasks do not negatively affect program delivery.

Program Budget

The comprehensive school counseling program's budget should be included in the budget-planning process at both the district and building levels. Budgets should be established annually and consistently with other departments in the school to ensure the comprehensive school counseling program has the resources to develop, implement, and manage its program effectively. These budgets should be separate from other district and building budgets (e.g., special education, at-risk, testing).

MCSCP Program Components

All of the required activities and services of a comprehensive school counseling program are grouped into four interactive program components: School Counseling Curriculum, Individual Student Planning, Responsive Services, and System Support. Some of these services are delivered directly to students and others are delivered indirectly on behalf of students. **Direct services** are interactions between school counselors and students. **Indirect Student Services** are interactions with others, on behalf of the student, including referrals for additional assistance, consultation and collaboration with parents, teachers, other educators and community organizations. It also includes management activities and services required to support a district's comprehensive school counseling program, as well as the other educational programs of a district. The program components are:

- **School Counseling Curriculum:** lessons presented to help students attain the desired Grade Level Expectations (GLEs) in the areas of social/emotional, academic and career development. The school counseling curriculum is systematically presented by school counselors in collaboration with teachers through K-12 classroom lessons or other learning activities.
- **Individual Student Planning:** ongoing systemic activities designed to assist students in establishing personal goals, transitioning through school and developing future plans.
- **Responsive Services:** activities designed to meet the immediate needs and concerns of students. Responsive services may include brief counseling in individual settings, small-group settings or crisis response.
- **System Support:** includes the management and evaluation activities and services required to effectively support a district or building comprehensive school counseling program.

School Counseling Curriculum

The purpose of the School Counseling Curriculum is to facilitate students' optimal growth and development by assisting them in acquiring competencies that promote social/emotional development, academic development, and career development. The curriculum component is a necessary part of a comprehensive school counseling program that addresses the school counseling Grade Level Expectations contained in the content element. The skills, knowledge, and attitudes that all students need to acquire should be the instructional responsibility of a comprehensive school counseling program. They are expressed as Grade Level Expectations (GLEs).

The School Counseling Curriculum consists of structured developmental activities presented systematically through classrooms and large groups from kindergarten through grade 12. School Counseling Curriculum activities are delivered through strategies such as classroom lessons and educational assemblies.

The Role of the School Counselor in School Counseling Curriculum

- **Classroom Units and Lessons** - School counselors work collaboratively with teachers to assist students in learning the Grade Level Expectations (GLEs) of the school counseling curriculum. They may teach alone, in teams, and/or assist the classroom teacher when delivering the units and lessons.
- **Educational Activities** - School counselors organize or present educational activities to assist students in learning the Grade Level Expectations (GLEs) of the school counseling curriculum.

It is important to work closely with teachers to organize where and when School Counseling Curriculum activities will be taught. These activities should be cross-referenced to state and national standards and provide effective ways to work closely with classroom teachers to achieve the educational goals of the district.

Individual Student Planning

Students and their parents/guardians have the right to expect that the school district is sensitive and responsive to students' unique career needs, including their needs for educational goal setting and career planning. The school counselor assists in student transitions: into kindergarten, grade to grade, into middle school, high school and post-secondary. Thus, an Individual Student Planning component in a comprehensive school counseling program is needed.

The foundation for Individual Student Planning is established during the elementary school years through School Counseling Curriculum lesson activities such as career awareness. It also helps students understand the value of all work and what people do when they go to work. Students and their parents are encouraged to gather and discuss materials that represent the whole child to assist in making decisions about the educational process.

Building on the foundation provided in elementary school, students begin to plan for the future during the middle school years through the Individual Student Planning component. During this period career exploration is introduced which helps students learn more about career paths and clusters, gather information about specific careers, and how these relate to them, and identify personal strengths and limitations. Students are encouraged to gather information about specific careers of interest to assist in making decisions about the high school course selection and the initial development of their Individual Career and Academic Plan (ICAP).

During the high school years, Career Planning is introduced which helps students apply what they have learned about themselves and career interest to plan courses of study, understand the importance of gaining experiences within their career cluster, and annually review/modify their Individual Career and Academic Plan (ICAP).

Within this component, activities are designed to help students evaluate their educational, career, and personal goals and to develop the ICAP no later than the 8th grade in collaboration with parents/guardians. Having students individualize and personalize their planning is a major focus. Individual Student Planning is implemented through educational career planning, transition activities, and appraisal for decision-making.

Programs of Study

The primary purpose of Programs of Study is to provide secondary students a successful transition between secondary and postsecondary education. The Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Improvement Act of 2006 (Perkins IV) called upon states and local education agencies to create secondary-to-postsecondary sequences of academic and career education coursework that lead students to attain a postsecondary degree or industry-recognized certificate or credential.

A requirement of Perkins IV is that school districts' career and technical education (CTE) programs will create Programs of Study around career clusters which will include a non-duplicative sequence of academic and technical education instruction, career counseling, linkages to postsecondary opportunities, and workplace learning opportunities, among others. At a minimum, Programs of Study must:

- incorporate and align secondary and postsecondary education elements;
- include academic and CTE content in a coordinated, non-duplicative progression of courses;
- offer the opportunity, where appropriate, for secondary students to acquire postsecondary credits; and
- lead to an industry-recognized credential or certificate at the postsecondary level, or an associate or baccalaureate degree

Missouri has created a model process for schools to use to develop curriculum and model templates.

The Program of Study process leads to at least two major outcomes:

1. An aligned curriculum within a CTE program built around a career cluster pathway that leads to a successful post-secondary transition
2. A Program of Study template that schools can use to guide students in the creation of their ICAP.

The state plan calls for CTE programs to develop at least one Program of Study within five years. The model process allows schools to continue to develop additional Programs of Study as needed and/or required.

Individual Academic and Career Plan (ICAP)

The purpose of the ICAP is to provide students with a way to frame their career and educational planning using a language about careers that does not limit their options but expands them by helping them envision a number of ways in which their skills and interests can be used. Students will have the opportunity to build their own ICAP, the foundation of which will be the Program of Study within their identified career cluster. Through comprehensive school counseling, the ICAP will reflect the coursework needed to complete the Program of Study including state and local graduation and assessment requirements, grade appropriate work-based opportunities and relevant co-curricular activities. Such activities may include but are not limited to job shadowing, service learning, internships, volunteer activities, after school employment, and student organization activities. The ICAP will further reflect the postsecondary goals of the student which will be reviewed annually and revised as necessary. The state-required assessments in which students will participate will be determined by the educational and career goals as set out in the ICAP. The Missouri School Improvement Program states that all students should have an ICAP built around a career path and/or cluster beginning no later than the end of 8th grade.

The Role of the School Counselor in Individual Student Planning

- **Educational Career Planning** - School counselors facilitate the process in which students develop planning skills and apply the skills to their individual academic plans. Students begin acquiring needed skills to develop a personal plan of study in elementary school where the emphasis is on career awareness. The process continues into middle school as the focus shifts to career exploration for their personal interests and strengths. The process culminates with career planning and the development of a relevant personal plan of study for high school and postsecondary education/training.
- **Transition Activities** - School counselors understand the importance that social/emotional competencies, academic skills and career and labor market information play as students develop and manage their personal plans of study. The school counselors' responsibility is to facilitate this effort when working with students they serve. Through the individual student planning component of a district's comprehensive school counseling program, school counselors assist students with the transitions from grade to grade, school to school, and/or school to work. It takes the involvement of the parents/guardian and other school staff along with the school counselor and student, to develop ICAPs that meet the individual needs of students.
- **Appraisal for Decision-Making** - School counselors coordinate work with students to analyze and evaluate their abilities, interests, skills, and achievements. Assessment data including results from formal testing, as well as informal evaluation information form a basis for developing short-term and long-term plans with students and parents/guardians.

Responsive Services

The school counselors should be available and responsive to special or unexpected needs of students and parents/guardians. Thus, the purpose of the Responsive Services component is to work with students whose personal circumstances, concerns, or problems have the potential to interfere with healthy social/emotional, academic, and career development. Issues that students may face include: academic challenges, educational and career decision-making, personal identity, family loss, relationships, school attendance, stress, substance abuse, physical abuse and neglect, and suicide. As a result, there is continuing need for brief individual counseling, small group counseling, consultation, and referral. The Responsive Services component also supports the activities in the School Counseling Curriculum and Individual Student Planning components.

As students are supported in overcoming barriers to their social/emotional, academic, and career development, parent/guardian involvement is essential. This may come in the form of referring their children for assistance, working with school counselors to identify issues of concern, giving permission for needed services, and providing help in resolving issues. Responsive Services are implemented through the following: brief individual counseling, small-group counseling, crisis intervention, consultation, and referral.

The Responsive Services component is different from the School Counseling Curriculum and Individual Student Planning components as the services involved are provided in response to individual needs. To conduct the services of this component, is useful to have district-wide written plans and policies concerning confidentiality, the reporting of suspected child abuse/neglect, and referrals. A clear district-wide policy about limits of confidentiality will help guide school counselors' work with students, parents/guardians, teachers, and administrators. As mandated reporters, school counselors are required by law to report suspected child abuse/neglect. A district-wide written policy and plan will inform those involved of the procedures the district follows. It is also necessary to compile a listing of referral sources available as well as have guidelines regarding when and how to make referrals.

The Role of the School Counselor in Responsive Services

- **Individual Counseling** - School counselors provide individual counseling for students who are experiencing educational difficulties, personal concerns, or struggles with normal developmental tasks. Brief Individual counseling (3-6 sessions) assists students in identifying problems, causes, alternatives, and possible consequences so that appropriate action can be taken.
- **Small Group Counseling** - School counselors provide small group counseling to students who need and will benefit from a small group setting to address their needs and concerns. Interventions may take the form of short-term issue groups or crisis intervention groups that deal with such topics as social skills, anger management, relationships, grief, and study skills.
- **Crisis Intervention** - School counselors play a leading role in crisis intervention within a school/district. They facilitate the processes needed to respond to a building/district crisis, such as student death, suicide, accidents, natural disasters, violence, etc. School counselors also work to assist students dealing with personal crises, including self-harm threats, homelessness, abuse/neglect, violence, family loss and other situations.
- **Consultation** - Consultation is an interactive process that school counselors provide to help parents/guardians, teachers, and administrators address the social/emotional, academic and career needs of students.
- **Referrals** - When brief counseling is not sufficient to address the needs of the student, the school counselor may suggest to parents that a referral to an outside practitioner and/or agency for extended counseling services may be appropriate. If parents choose to seek outside assistance it is the responsibility of the parent to set up the appointments and continue the counseling sessions. School counselors use school and community referral sources that deal with crises such as suicide, violence, abuse/neglect, and terminal illness. These referral sources may include mental health agencies, employment and training programs, vocational rehabilitation, juvenile services, and/or social services.

System Support

System Support contains the management activities and services required to effectively support a district's comprehensive school counseling program. The administration and management activities of a district's comprehensive school counseling program are located in this component as are activities that support other educational programs. The System Support component is implemented through activities such as program management, professional development, staff and community relations, consultation, committee participation, community outreach, and evaluation.

The Role of the School Counselor in System Support

- **School Counseling Program Management** - The school counselor plans and manages tasks needed to support activities conducted in the district's comprehensive school counseling program. Such activities might include: conducting time on task analyses, developing a yearly calendar of activities, developing a yearly budget, writing reports regarding the comprehensive school counseling program, establishing priorities for the year, and identifying resources needed to implement the program.
- **School Counseling Program Advisory Council** – The school counselor organizes a school counseling program advisory council. Representative stakeholders should be invited to be members and it is recommended that a minimum of two meetings per year be convened for the committee to review and make recommendations for the program.

- **Evaluation** - The school counseling program's on-going evaluation process consists of three major components which are conceptualized as "Program + Personnel = Results. " See section referencing $P + P = R$.
 - **Program Evaluation** asks the question, "To what extent is the program in place?" It is measured using the Internal Improvement Review (IIR).
 - **Personnel Evaluation** asks the question, "To what extent is the program staffed with highly skilled school counselors?" It is measured using the school counselor evaluation.
 - **Results Evaluation** asks the questions, "To what extent is the program having an impact on relevant student outcomes such as achievement, attendance, and behavior?" "How do students, parents and teachers perceive what they have learned from participating in the school counseling program? It is measured using data showing evidence of impact?"
- **Professional Development** – To stay current and relevant in the school counseling profession, the school counselor must participate regularly in appropriate professional development. This may involve participation in regular school in-service training, attending professional meetings, workshops, and/or completing postgraduate course work pertaining to school counseling program goals and objectives.
- **Staff and Community Relations** - The school counselor educates and informs the staff and the community about the comprehensive school counseling program through newsletters, local media, social media, and/or school-community presentations.
- **Consultation and Collaboration** - School counselors consult and collaborate with teachers and other staff members to provide information and receive feedback on the emerging needs of students.
- **Committee Participation** - The school counselor serves on departmental/district curriculum committees, community committees, and/or advisory boards in order to support other programs in the school and community and to advocate for the school counseling program.
- **Community Outreach** - School counselors gain knowledge about community resources and agencies, employment opportunities, and local labor market information. This may require school counselors to periodically visit postsecondary schools and training programs, local businesses, industries, and social service agencies.
- **Program Advocacy** – School counselors promote the activities of the program to various stakeholder groups. They also share data that demonstrates the impact of the program on students and the school community. Additionally, school counselors educate the stakeholder groups on the role of the school counselor and benefits of the school counseling program.
- **School Support** - The school counselor participates in school related responsibilities equivalent to expectations of all school staff.

Summary Chart

Figure 2 is a sample chart that summarizes the role of the school counselor, including the four program components. This one-page summary chart can be created for a district's program to show the services and activities school counselors deliver through a comprehensive school counseling program to students, parents/guardians, and the community.

Missouri Comprehensive School Counseling Program Components

Component	School Counseling Curriculum	Individual Student Planning	Responsive Services	System Support
Description	Provides school counseling content in a systematic way to all students K-12	Assists students in planning, monitoring, and managing their social/emotional, academic, and career, development	Addresses the immediate needs and concerns of students	Includes program, staff, and school support activities and services
Purpose	Student awareness, skill development, and application of skills needed in everyday life	Development and use of Personal Plans of Study	Intervention	Program delivery and support
Topics Addressed	<u>Academic Development</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Study Skills • Goal Setting • Pre-employment Skills • Job Preparation • Post-Secondary Decision Making <u>Career Development</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Career Awareness • Career Exploration <u>Social/Emotional Development</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Self-Concept • Conflict Resolution • Personal Responsibilities • Peer Friendship • Decision-Making Skills • Substance Abuse Prevention Program • Cross-Cultural Understandings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Setting Personal Goals • Decision-Making Skills • Course Selection • Transitioning: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Grade to Grade ✓ School to School ✓ School to Career • Multiple-Year Planning • Financial Aid • Knowledge of Career Opportunities • Career Awareness • Interest Inventories • Career Shadowing • Work Habits 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Academic Concerns • School-related Concerns <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Tardiness ✓ Absences and Truancy ✓ Misbehavior ✓ School-Avoidance ✓ Dropout Prevention • Relationship Concerns • Physical/Sexual/Emotional Abuse • Grief/Loss/Death • Substance Abuse • Family Issues • Sexuality Issues • Coping with Stress 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School Counseling Program, Development and Management • Parent/Guardian Education • Teacher/Administrative or Consultation • School Improvement Planning • Counselor Professional Development • Research and Publishing • Community Outreach • Public Relations • School Support • Advisory Council
School Counselor's Role	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Structured Groups • Classroom Lessons 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appraisal for Decision Making • Educational Career Planning • Transition Activities • ICAP Development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brief Individual Counseling • Small-Group Counseling • Crisis Intervention • Consultation • Referral 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Program Management • Evaluation • Professional Development • Staff and Community Relations • Consultation and Collaboration • Committee Participation • Community Outreach • Program Advocacy • School Support

Figure 2

MCSCP Tiered Approach

Missouri Comprehensive School Counseling Program naturally frames itself to a Response to Intervention type model. When fully implemented, a comprehensive program proactively addresses the social/emotional, academic and career development needs of all students while addressing their barriers to learning.

Tier 1	Universal programming for all students based on the school counseling GLEs and includes school counseling curriculum and individual student planning.
Tier 2	Strategic efforts to identify students who experience barriers to learning and support these students with targeted responsive services interventions.
Tier 3	Intensive interventions for students for whom Tier 1 and Tier 2 interventions have not been effective. Referrals are made for more intensive support.

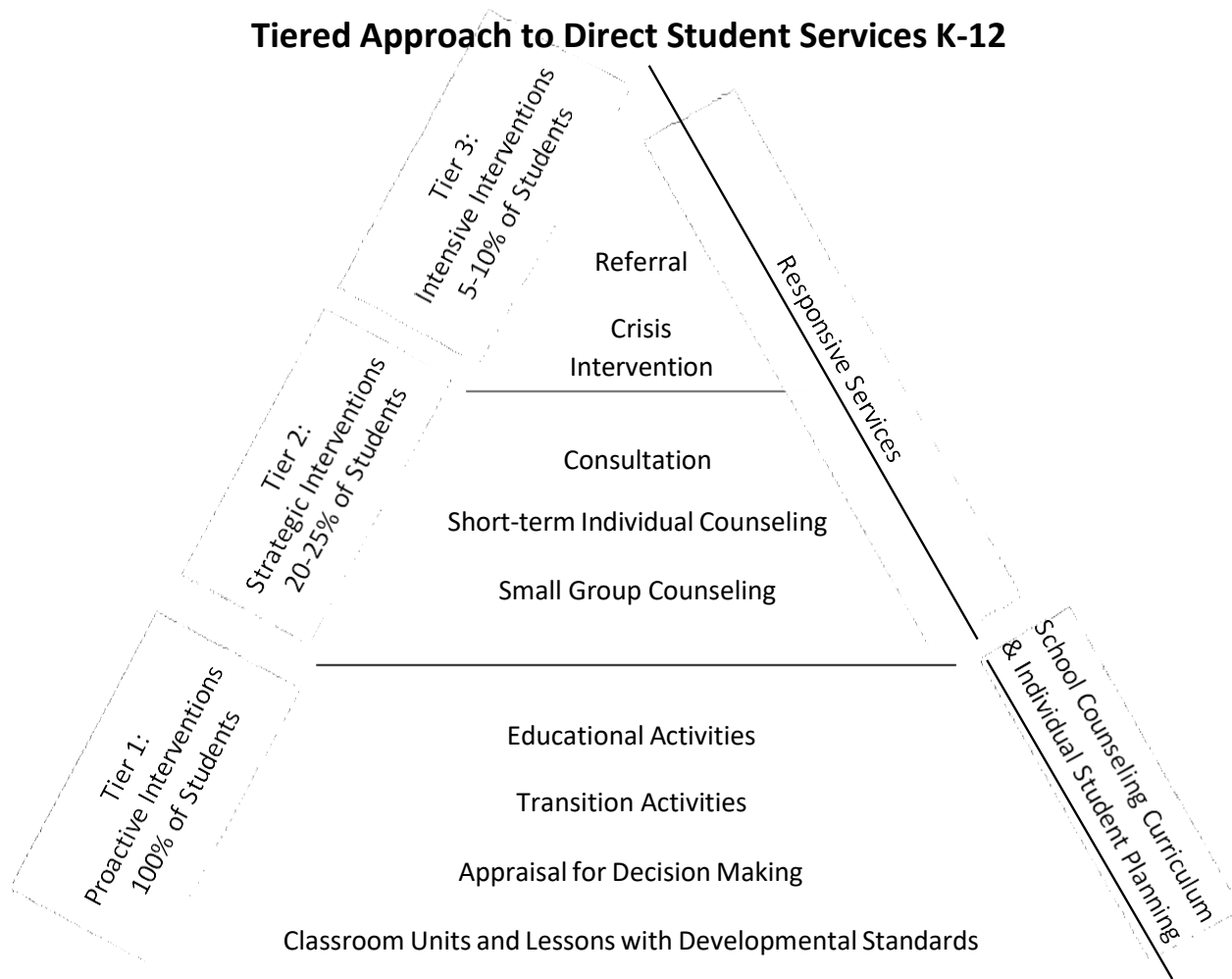


Figure 3

Recommended Distribution of Total School Counselors' Time

Appropriate use of a school counselor's time is crucial in developing and implementing a school's comprehensive counseling program. The four program components provide the structure for judging appropriate allocation of the school counselor's time. One criterion to use in making such judgment is the concept of program balance. The School Counseling Curriculum, Individual Student Planning, and Responsive Services program components represent the direct services school counselors provide to students, parents/guardians, teachers, and the community. The System Support program component organizes the indirect services of the program. While the assumption is that school counselors' time should be spread across all four program components, it is recommended that the first three components (direct services) encompass 80% of the school counselor's time. Therefore, 20% of a school counselor's time is used to provide indirect services to these groups. Care must be taken, however, to monitor the time spent on System Support tasks because the primary focus for the school counselor's time is to provide direct services to students, teachers, parents/guardians.

Another criterion to consider is that different grade levels require different allocations of school counselors' time across the program components. For example, at the elementary level, more of the school counselor's time may be spent working in the School Counseling Curriculum with less time spent on Individual Student Planning. In high school, those time allocations will most likely be reversed. The way in which personnel in a school district or school building allocate their time depends on the needs of their students, school, parents/guardians, and the community. Furthermore, once chosen, the time allocations are not fixed forever and can be reprioritized as needed. The purpose for the recommended time allocation is to provide direction to the program, administration, and school counselors involved. School counselors and administrators who participated in field-testing the MCSCP recommended the suggested time percentages seen in the table below.

Recommended Use of Counselor Time (Percentage Rate)

Missouri Comprehensive School Counseling Program Components		Elementary School	Middle/Junior High School	High School	K-12
	School Counseling Curriculum	35-45	25-35	15-25	25-35
	Individual Student Planning	5-10	15-25	25-35	20-30
	Responsive Services	30-40	30-40	25-35	25-35
Indirect Service	System Support	10-15	10-15	15-20	10-15
Total*		100	100	100	100

*Note: 100% of the school counselor's time should be devoted to the implementation, delivery, and management of the comprehensive school counseling program.

Figure 4

Resources

The resources needed for a successful comprehensive school counseling program can be divided into the following categories: human resources, financial resources, and political resources.

Human Resources

The human resources of a district's comprehensive school counseling program — school counselors, teachers, administrators, parents/guardians, students, community members, and business and labor partners — all play a vital role in the school counseling program. Although school counselors coordinate the program and are the main providers of school counseling services, the involvement, cooperation, and support of teachers and administrators are necessary for successful implementation of school counseling activities. The involvement is also necessary for full student participation in the school counseling program.

Financial Resources

Appropriate and adequate financial resources are critical to the success of a comprehensive school counseling program. A budget is required to purchase materials and equipment, and it is recommended this budget be allocated across the district buildings and grade levels. Well-designed school counseling facilities in each building, organized to meet the needs of the school counseling program are also required. Materials and equipment are needed so that the school counseling activities across the four program components can be fully implemented.

Political Resources

The political resources of a comprehensive school counseling program include school board policies, pertinent state and federal laws and regulations, local school district administrative guidelines, and professional association position statements and ethical standards. Clear and concise board of education policies are mandatory for the successful operation of comprehensive school counseling programs in school districts. These policies represent statements of support, courses of action, or guiding principles designed to influence and determine decisions in school districts. Those that pertain to school counseling programs must consider pertinent laws, regulations and standards as they are being written, adopted, and implemented.

SECTION III

Transitioning to MCSCP

A challenge that districts face is how to make the transition from their current organizational structure for school counseling to a comprehensive school counseling program based on the Missouri Comprehensive School Counseling Program (MCSCP). This section of the manual describes the five phases of change that enable school districts to manage the transition to a fully implemented district comprehensive school counseling program. The five phases of the transition process are: planning, designing, implementing, evaluating, and enhancing.

Transition Process Phases		
1	Planning	This involves getting organized and obtaining the commitment of the board of education, administrators, and school counselors. It also involves forming a steering committee and advisory council, as well as conducting a thorough assessment of the district's current school counseling activities, services and needs.
2	Designing	A comprehensive school counseling program tailored specifically for the district must be designed and should include an implementation plan to put the program into operation.
3	Implementing	Implementation involves gaining adoption of the program by the board of education and removing non-school counseling tasks from school counselors' duties so the expectations of the district's comprehensive school counseling program can be conducted.
4	Evaluating	Evaluation focuses on assessing the program, personnel and analyzing the results of the building/district assessments as compared to the MCSCP recommendations.
5	Enhancing	Data is used to guide the improvement and enhancement of the district's comprehensive school counseling program.

Planning

Planning begins with the decision to develop and implement a comprehensive school counseling program. Once this decision is made, several tasks must be completed during the first year. These tasks include:

- Appointing the district's steering committee and advisory council
- Gaining the board of education's and the district administrators' support and authorization to develop and implement the district's comprehensive school counseling program

Appointing a District or Building Steering Committee

The district or building steering committee serves as the internal management group for the process of making the transition to a comprehensive school counseling program. This is a district-wide committee charged with the responsibility of coordinating the school counseling activities and services in all buildings to ensure a systematic and sequential district-wide program. District steering committee members are key school leaders who serve as visionaries for the program and motivators for the involvement of others.

These committee members include building-level administrators, school counselors from all district levels, and interested teachers and staff. One or two representatives from the district's central office should also be involved. The size of the steering committee is determined locally; however, a group of six to ten persons is recommended. Ordinarily, a school counselor serves as chair.

The responsibilities of the district steering committee include the following:

- Become knowledgeable about the Missouri Comprehensive School Counseling Program
- Understand the conditions necessary for change to take place locally
- Meet with the administration and the board of education to gain support and secure authorization to proceed with the development and implementation of the district's program
- Create a plan to develop and implement the district-wide comprehensive school counseling program and ensure all work is completed
- Provide progress reports to administrators and the board of education
- Appoint, support and monitor work groups of school counselors, as well as others, to accomplish a fully implemented comprehensive school counseling program

Appointing a School Counseling Program Advisory Council

The advisory council is a school and community-based group. Its sole purpose is providing advice and counsel concerning the development and implementation of the district or building comprehensive school counseling program. The members of the school counseling program advisory council should have a shared enthusiasm for students and school counseling. The selection procedure will vary from district to district. Advisory council membership may include parents/guardians, school board members, students, community leaders, agency personnel, and teachers. When identifying potential members, the following points should be considered:

- a) The advisory council should represent the diversity of the district's patrons and business community, as well as the diversity of the student population.
- b) Representation should be sought from the school board, school staff, parents/guardians, and students.
- c) Community members with diverse viewpoints should be included in the committee selection.
- d) Individuals who possess a shared enthusiasm and commitment to students even though their ideas may differ, should be included.

Size of the Council	The size of the council depends upon the size of the district. It is most important to have broad representation and good attendance at each meeting.
Composition	Advisory council membership may include parents/guardians, school board members, students, community leaders, agency personnel, and teachers.
Length of Appointment	Appointing members for rotating terms will ensure that there are always experienced members on the council. It is suggested that the terms be from 2 to 3 years and that the number of years are drawn at the first meeting to determine the length of term each member will serve.
Reappointment	It should be determined if advisory council members should serve more than one term and, if so, how many times they may be reappointed.
Governance of Council	An advisory council chair election process must be determined, and a chair appointed.
Frequency of Meetings	The advisory council should meet face-to-face at least twice a year. With present technology, meetings do not necessarily have to be face-to-face, although this is the ideal situation. Video conferencing, instant messaging, and e-mails are other ways that the advisory committee members can communicate with one another.
Structure	The advisory council may be organized at the district or individual building level.
Functions	An advisory council provides support, offers advice, reviews the status of the district program and encourages further development to meet the goals of a school district's comprehensive school counseling program. It is important to emphasize that the council is an advisory group, not a decision-making body. The advisory council is a channel of communication to and from the district schools and the community. It is a public relations group that interprets the district comprehensive school counseling program to district patrons.

Gaining Assurances from the Board of Education

During the first year of planning, it is critical for the steering committee to meet with the board of education to present a rationale for the needed transition to a comprehensive school counseling program, as well as the plan for implementation. The goal is to seek the endorsement of the board of education for the transition and the authorization to proceed. By endorsing the concept of a comprehensive school counseling program for the district and by authorizing the development and implementation of the program, the board of education:

- Authorizes the administration to provide school counselors with the time and resources to develop and implement a comprehensive school counseling program under the leadership of the steering committee
- Receives periodic progress reports from the steering committee
- Identifies the program as an integral program of the school district and adopts a policy that mandates the program
- Works with the steering committee and administration to fully implement the program once it is approved
- Works with the advisory council and school staff to publicize the program to the community
- Provides sufficient funding to ensure continued program development, implementation, and evaluation through the program enhancement process

Involving Stakeholders

It is important to maintain student, administrator, teacher, parent, and community involvement throughout each phase of the district's transition to a fully implemented comprehensive school counseling program. Stakeholder involvement translates into a sense of ownership and greater credibility for the program. The following list describes ways to involve others:

- Plan ways to get the input of individuals and groups of students who represent the diversity of the district community.
- Administer a student needs assessment (Program Planning Survey).
- Develop a communication system for stakeholders. (e.g., weekly bulletins, systematically meeting on a regular basis).
- Survey teachers to identify needed professional development to prepare them for their involvement in the district's comprehensive school counseling program.
- Invite stakeholder groups to attend the board presentation to demonstrate support for the program.
- Discuss the results of the assessment of the current program with stakeholders.
- Consider holding discussion groups or evening meetings.
- Provide time for parents/guardians to share information about their expertise/special interests.
- Talk with employers about the district's school counseling program and seek their support and involvement.

Assessing the Current Programming

In the planning phase of the transition process, a critical task is to thoroughly assess the current program. Groups of school counselors from all levels will be required to conduct the work involved. One or more work groups are needed to study and report on internal factors/trends in the district that may have an impact on the development and implementation of the district's program. In addition, one or more work groups are needed to study factors in the community and beyond. Each of the work groups provide periodic progress reports to the steering committee and submit a final report to the steering committee.

Conducting an Initial Time on Task Analysis

The Time on Task Analysis is an electronic survey of the school counselor's time spent on performing the tasks in the program as it currently exists. The results of this initial analysis will provide baseline data for comparing the time on tasks involved in the *current* program to the time on tasks chosen for the district's desired comprehensive school counseling program.

Before the initial Time on Task is conducted, it is important for the counselor(s) to decide on where their current tasks fit into the program components. This exercise provides all school counselors with a common understanding of how to categorize their activities when they complete the Time on Task Analysis form so that interpretations will be consistent. It is important to remember that the school counselor participates in school related responsibilities equivalent to expectations of all school staff.

For the initial Time on Task Analysis, the following steps are necessary:

1. All school counselors in the district will select the same ten days spread evenly throughout the school year to conduct the Time on Task Analysis. These ten days should reflect typical days that contain a variety of school counseling program activities within the four components as well as any non-school counseling tasks (that create Barriers to Implementation) that may be present.
2. Use the Time on Task Analysis form to keep track of the actual time school counselors currently spend on activities in each program component plus non-school counseling. You may wish to designate more than one category during a 30-minute time period. For those instances, you will put the number of minutes spent in the time categories used. In the end, make sure that each row contains no more than a total of 30 minutes. Note that the form has a time block for before school, after school, and evening activities conducted as part of the program. Leave rows blank when you are NOT on duty (i.e. lunch).
3. The data will be electronically analyzed, and charts will be generated automatically.
4. Compare these results with the State's suggested percentages for each of the four components. Share the results data with the steering committee to determine improvements/enhancements that should be implemented in your district's Comprehensive School Counseling Program.

Conducting an Internal Factors/Trends Analysis

This analysis examines factors/trends inside the schools of a district that may impact the development and management of the district's comprehensive school counseling program. The Internal Improvement Review (IIR) document uses the state school counseling standards to determine the degree of program implementation. The IIR should be used as one of the surveys to gather internal factors/trends data. It is important that school counselors and administrators work together to complete and interpret the results of the IIR.

The factors/trends to assess may include the following:

- Who the current program serves
- Existing resources (personnel, equipment, materials, and facilities)
- School counseling activities presently in place, including those directed by school counselors and those directed by others
- Staff expertise that may be helpful in conducting a district's comprehensive school counseling program activities
- Attitudes of faculty, staff, and students
- Student needs
- The school's/district's Comprehensive School Improvement Plan (CSIP)

Additional program evaluation surveys can be used to assess the attitudes of students, teachers, staff, administrators, and parents regarding the school counseling program.

Conducting an External Factors/Trends Analysis

This analysis examines factors/trends outside the school district that may have an impact on the district's comprehensive school counseling program. These factors/trends may include, but are not limited to the following:

- Postsecondary activities of graduates
- Economic conditions of the community
- Population changes
- Attitudes of community members
- Community issues
- Community resources

Designing the Program

The designing phase of the transition process is the time to develop and write the district's desired comprehensive school counseling program. Using the Missouri Comprehensive School Counseling Program as described in Section II of this manual as the basic structure to follow, work groups are appointed to organize and write the district's comprehensive school counseling program manual. The work in this phase of the transition process includes conducting the Missouri Comprehensive School Counseling Program Planning Survey to help determine the focus of the school counseling program including the School Counseling Curriculum.

Program Planning Survey

The school counseling program planning survey process is a method to assist school counselors in identifying the content standards that students, staff, and parents/guardians rank as priorities. The School Counseling Program Planning Survey is one method for the selection of student grade level expectations that will form the content of the district's comprehensive school counseling program. Program Planning Surveys may be administered using paper forms or electronic forms that automatically tabulate the responses. Example questions for Program Planning Surveys may be found on the DESE school counseling web page under System Support component section. Other methods include the professional judgment of school counselors and the input of the advisory council.

Involving Stakeholders

It is important to maintain student, administrator, teacher, parent, and community involvement throughout each phase of the district's transition to a fully implemented comprehensive school counseling program. The following list describes a few of the possible ways to involve others:

- Involve students in the work groups used to develop and implement the district's comprehensive school counseling program.
- Initiate and maintain ongoing and frequent communication with stakeholders.
- Communicate the results of the School Counseling Program Planning Survey with stakeholders.
- Seek input/assistance with the presentation to the board of education. Practice the presentation with teachers playing the role of board members and include teachers as presenters to explain ways the district's comprehensive school counseling program will benefit them.
- Publish a list (for teachers) of the School Counseling Curriculum activities that are available. Include in the listing the subject area(s) and the activities emphasized.
- Work with teachers to develop School Counseling Curriculum activities/units.
- Recognize the involvement of members of the community who are involved in the district's school counseling program

Writing the Desired Program

The full details of the program, along with guidelines for implementation, evaluation and enhancement are written in the district's comprehensive school counseling program manual. It includes the school counselor job description and an overview of the school counseling curriculum. A brief program overview that describes the program for school and public constituencies is also important. Having a district-approved comprehensive school counseling program manual provides a reference for all stakeholders as well as providing a succession plan when there is a change in personnel whether school counseling, administrative or school board personnel.

Program Manual Outline

The next step in the design phase is to develop a district-wide comprehensive school counseling program manual to be used by school counselors. It should include at least the following sections:

- Introduction
- Content Area Standards and Grade Level Expectations
- Structural Components/Foundation
- Program Components
- Job Descriptions
- Guidelines for Program and Personnel Evaluation
- Ethical Standards
- School Board Policy

In addition, the manual should include a comprehensive evaluation plan consisting of program implementation review, performance-based school counselor evaluation and results-based evaluation.

It is important to remember that the manual should reflect the district's desired program, tailored to meet the needs of the students, parents/guardians, and the local community. It is the best possible program that will serve these constituents most effectively. It is not a description of the school counseling program as it currently exists in the district. Figure 5 provides an example program manual outline.

Comprehensive School Counseling Program Manual Outline

Section I: Introduction

- Brief description of the district's comprehensive school counseling program
- Acknowledgements
- Letter or narrative from Superintendent supporting the program

Section II: Content Area Strands and Grade-Level Expectations

- Determined by the program planning survey and the steering committee

Section III: Structural Components/Foundation

- Mission & Vision
- School Counseling Program Facilities
- Advisory Council
- School Counseling Resources
- Staffing Patterns
- Budget

Section IV: Program Components

- School Counseling Curriculum
 - Provide overview of curriculum, exact lesson plans not needed
- Individual Student Planning
 - Include Individual Career & Academic Plan (ICAP)
- Responsive Services
 - Define individual counseling and appropriate topics
 - Define small group counseling process and appropriate topics
 - Define consultation
 - Explain referral process
- System Support
 - Define activities for:
 - Program management
 - Evaluation: Program, Personnel, and Results
 - Program improvement
 - Professional development
 - Staff and community relations
 - Consultation and collaboration
 - Committee participation
 - Community outreach
 - Program advocacy
- Suggested Distributions of School Counselor Time

Section V: Job Descriptions

- Include duties required to fully implement the district's CSCP
- Include school counselor job descriptions for elementary, middle, and high school
- Refer to the DESE web page under the Educator tab under Personnel Evaluation

Section VI: Guidelines for Program and Personnel Evaluation

- School counselor specific
- Refer to the DESE web page under the Educator tab under Personnel Evaluation

Section VII: Ethical Standards

- Include copies of relevant professional association standards

Section VIII: School Board Policy

- Include school boards policies for the district's CSCP

Figure 5

Job Description

A first step is the development of a job description for school counselors that is based directly on the structure and activities of the school district's comprehensive school counseling program. As reflected in the Missouri Comprehensive School Counseling Program framework and the Missouri School Counselor Standards, the job description includes the following key duties:

- The school counselor implements the School Counseling Curriculum component through the use of effective instructional skills and the careful planning of structured group sessions.
- The school counselor implements the Individual Student Planning component by guiding individuals and groups of students and their parents/guardians through the development of Individual Academic and Career Plans.
- The school counselor implements the Responsive Services component through the effective use of individual and small group counseling, consultation, and referral skills.
- The school counselor implements the System Support component through effective school counseling program management and support for other educational programs.
- The school counselor uses professional communication and interaction with the school community.
- The school counselor fulfills professional responsibilities.

School Counseling Curriculum

The results from the School Counseling Program Planning Survey are used to determine the content area strands and GLEs that will receive emphasis through your district's comprehensive school counseling program. It is also important to use the knowledge of the school counseling staff to incorporate other content area strands and GLEs that may be necessary. During the Designing phase, it is essential that a yearly curriculum map be designed to reflect the scope and sequence of the curriculum as it relates to the content area strands and GLEs.

Program Overview

It is important for a district to develop a brief overview of the program which can be in the form of a pamphlet or brochure. This pamphlet or brochure could be used for program advocacy. Additionally, this information should also be included on the school district's website

Board of Education Presentation

In preparing for the board of education presentation, the steering committee should work closely with the Superintendent. Sufficient time should be secured on the agenda to thoroughly explain the program and to answer the questions/concerns of board members. It is important for the board to clearly understand the district's comprehensive school counseling program and the operational implications of approval (e.g., budget, reassignment of non-school counseling tasks which create barriers to implementation, adequate facilities, resources, and staff development). In addition, it is important to gain approval of the plan to implement the program and a board policy to guide the program.

Materials presented to the board of education should include the following:

- The district's comprehensive school counseling program overview
- A proposed implementation plan which includes multi-year steps and timelines for full implementation; resource needs such as additional staff, facilities, equipment, materials; guidelines for the reassignment of non-school counseling tasks; and projected annual budgetary needs (start-up, as well as ongoing)

In order to maximize the board presentation, focus should be centered on the contributions of the program to overall student success including academic achievement, college and career readiness, as well as the school district's mission and comprehensive school improvement plan.

Primary goals:

- Approval of the district's comprehensive school counseling program and recognition as an integral educational program of the district.
- Approval of the program's implementation plan including reassignment of non-school counseling tasks.
- A board policy that guides the district's comprehensive school counseling program.

Implementing and Beyond

In the implementation phase, school counselors begin delivering the four program components to help students achieve social/emotional, academic and career development. Each year, individual calendars should be developed based upon time allotments needed to conduct all of the activities of the four program components. Throughout the implementation phase, school counselors should participate in evaluation, enhancement, and advocacy of the comprehensive school counseling program.

Calendarinq

A calendar of school counseling program activities organized by the four program components should be developed prior to the beginning of each school year. Calendarinq enables school counselors to organize and manage the activities of the program and to align them with the school's master calendar when possible. They provide a time frame for scheduling resources and equipment. They also provide an organized, systematic way to implement and deliver the district's comprehensive school counseling program. Calendarinq enables school counselors to organize their time to meet students' needs and to communicate the goals of the district's comprehensive school counseling program to students, staff, parents/guardians, and the community. Having a school counseling program calendar of events and activities, cross-walked with the school's master calendar, helps to integrate the school counseling program with other school activities and encourages total staff involvement. It is important to keep in mind the desired time allotments for each program component so that balance is maintained in carrying out the district's comprehensive school counseling program. There are examples of weekly, monthly, and yearly calendars available on the DESE website.

Conducting the Yearly Time on Task Analysis

To help ensure that counselors are spending 100% of their time working within their comprehensive school counseling program, periodic Time on Task Analyses should be conducted. A Time on Task Analysis will provide schools and districts the data they need to determine where school counseling staff time is being spent and to develop any plans necessary that will lead toward the 100% target.

Advocating for the Program

After the board of education has officially approved the district's comprehensive school counseling program, the steering committee should work with the Superintendent's office to plan a way to formally initiate the program. The advisory council should be included in the planning process to coordinate an event that will involve students, parents/guardians, teachers, and business leaders, as well as the board of education and the superintendent. It is important to keep all informed about the activities of the program and to communicate regularly about the successes of the program to the school and community. The written program overview is a vital tool in advocating for the program.

Involving Others

A comprehensive program requires the input and active involvement of all groups who have a stake in the outcomes of the program. The involvement of parents/guardians, teachers, administrators, and members of the business/labor and industry community in this phase of the program will generate a broad base of ongoing support. The following are suggestions for involving stakeholders:

- Hold forums in common areas of the school to discuss specific aspects of the program with students. Announce the time, place, and purpose to all students; personally invite those who may be hesitant to participate.
- A minimum of one in-service per year should be conducted to provide teachers with new information, share ideas, and discuss mutual concerns.
- Develop, with teachers, a schedule for your classroom lessons. Publish the schedule well in advance of the first lesson.
- Encourage teachers to take part in the lesson and evaluation of School Counseling Curriculum activities.
- Publicize ways parents/guardians can become involved. Examples include: serving on the advisory council, helping to organize planning surveys, including mailing to parents/guardians and business community, serving as classroom resource people, serving as resource librarians, and welcoming new families.
- Develop methods for frequent communication with parents/guardians.
- Work closely with the school's Parent/Teacher/Student Organization (PTSO) and discuss how they can help support the school counseling program.
- Plan student displays at a variety of community agency sites.
- Volunteer to attend meetings of service organizations to talk about the district's school counseling program.

Barriers to Transition

Making transitions always requires negotiating and overcoming barriers to full program implementation. The transition to a district comprehensive school counseling program is no exception. The planning phase emphasizes the need to plan proactively for the resistance (subtle and overt) that may naturally occur as the program is introduced. Knowing what to expect in terms of potential challenges will help districts engage in anticipatory planning to avoid and/or effectively deal with the barriers that appear to block the change.

School counselors can learn from the experiences of others who have been involved in implementing comprehensive school counseling programs. During field testing for the Missouri Comprehensive School Counseling Program, approximately 300 school counselors and administrators in Missouri were asked to identify the barriers they had faced in their work toward full implementation (Lapan, Gysbers, Kayson, 2007). The same school counselors and administrators were then asked to identify possible solutions for each of the categories. The barriers and solutions are listed below:

Barriers and Solutions to Transition

<p style="text-align: center;">Time Spent Completing Non- School Counseling Tasks</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use the Time Task Analysis to demonstrate how counselors spend time and identify barriers to implementation. Provide a report to the principal so he or she is aware of the actual time these take away from the school counseling program. • Develop a job description with the principal and/or district-level administration; clarify times to be spent in each area of responsibility. • Make others aware of barriers to implementation and how those barriers limit the effectiveness of the comprehensive school counseling program. • Work with the principal to prioritize responsibilities. • Work with the advisory council and steering committee to identify alternative means to address barriers to implementation. • Take control of your own time. Rule time; don't let time rule you. • Work out a weekly/monthly calendar; post and/or distribute to everyone. • Allot a specific time each day/week for planning time; be protective of that time. • Work with the principal, the faculty, parents and the community to gain support for removing barriers to implementation.
<p style="text-align: center;">Lack of administrative support</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide administrators with information about the benefits of a comprehensive school counseling program. Relate the benefits to the Missouri School Improvement Program (MSIP) and to the School Improvement Plan (CSIP) • Invite administrators to attend state workshops. • Involve administrators in planning. Communicate needs to administrators in proactive ways. • Report successes • Advocate by setting priorities and discussing them with the administrator. • Help administrators understand the counselor role. • Strengthen communication between administrator and counselor. • Provide all administrators with a copy of the Administrators' Guide.
<p style="text-align: center;">High counselor to student ratio</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use the Time Task Analysis to show your administrator the effect of the high ratio on your ability to provide direct student services. • Use Process, Perceptual and Results Data to demonstrate the negative effect of the ratio on outcomes. • Hire clerical staff to do routine clerical tasks to free the counselor to work with more students.

Barriers and Solutions to Transition

Program Resistance	<p>Staff Resistance:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Educate the school staff about the school counselor’s role and the Missouri Comprehensive School Counseling Program. Include information about the benefits of the program for students and teachers. • Solicit the support of administrators to advocate for the program. • Be persistent. Changes in attitude take time and patience. • Conduct professional development activities. • Involve faculty on steering and advisory committees. <p>Parent/Special Interest Group Resistance:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Know your community and support base. • Educate your community with numerous positive public relations activities. • Acknowledge resistant factions but don’t let resistance intimidate. • Gain endorsements from parent-teacher-student organizations and community service groups. • Involve individuals with diverse viewpoints on the advisory council and in work groups. • Hold open forums to discuss the comprehensive school counseling program and its benefits to students. • Make materials readily available for review.
Teacher Resistance to Relinquishing Class Time for School Counseling Activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Educate teachers through in-service and advocacy activities about the comprehensive school counseling program. • Seek administrative support and encouragement for delivery of classroom school counseling curriculum. • Schedule time with teachers early in the school year. • Publish a schedule and stick to it. • Plan meaningful classroom presentations. • Work with classroom teachers to plan lessons that connect school counseling GLEs to subject matter GLEs. • Encourage teachers to remain in the classrooms when school counselors present school counseling activities. This helps with the generalization of lesson concepts into the regular classroom.

Barriers and Solutions to Transition

<p>Lack of Resources</p>	<p>Budget:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explore possibilities of alternative funding for services and positions. • Use business partners as a source for support and resources; solicit funds from local businesses. • Work with administrators to make the comprehensive school counseling program a part of the district and/or building budgeting priorities and processes <p>Materials:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use free materials available on the DESE website. • Seek free and inexpensive materials. • Network and share materials with other school counselors by attending national, district, and state conferences. <p>For Space:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Go on a “spacewalk.” Look for places that could be rearranged and used for various purposes. • Rearrange existing space. <p>Professional Development:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Network with counselors in other districts, visit their schools, and initiate “Share Days.” • Attend district, state and national meetings and conferences. • Develop an area support group of counselors who are implementing the program. • New counselors are required to participate in a school counselor mentoring program. <p>Clerical Support:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keep a Time on Task Analysis and discuss the amount of time spent in non-school counseling related duties with your administrator.
<p>Special Education & 504 Involvement</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • While school counselors have a role in supporting special education and 504 students, school counselors are not responsible for coordination of those services nor are they responsible or trained for administering individual assessments.

Barriers to Implementation

Barriers to implementation are categorized as supervisory duties, administrative duties, clerical duties, and special programs and services responsibilities. These non-school counseling tasks need to be reassigned so that school counselors can devote their time to fully implementing the district's comprehensive school counseling program.

Budget constraints in many districts may preclude the instantaneous reassignment of non-school counseling tasks. To ensure that the transition to a fully implemented comprehensive school counseling program is made systematically, it is critical that a written non-school counseling task displacement plan is developed as a part of the overall implementation plan presented to the board of education. Below are the suggested reassignments of tasks in the four categories.

Assigned Supervisory Duties	
Coordinating and monitoring school assemblies	This is an administrative function that administrators should perform.
Hall duty, cafeteria supervision, bus loading and unloading supervision, and restroom supervision	These duties could be shared equally among all staff. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teachers could be assigned to some of these duties as a regular part of their schedules. • Volunteers could assist with some of these tasks.
Chaperoning school functions and athletic event supervision	These duties could be shared among the staff. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Booster club members could assist staff with some of the athletic events. • School staff could be paid extra to take on chaperoning duties.
Substitute teaching	Substitute teachers should be used in the absence of teachers.

Administrative Duties	
Developing the master schedule	Administrators can seek input from school counselors, but it is their responsibility to plan and develop the master schedule.
Acting as the principal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Retired school administrators could be hired for this purpose. • Teachers who have administrative certification could fill this role. • The superintendent or other central office administrators could be called upon to act as principal for the day.
Administering discipline	Administering discipline and assessing consequences for student actions are administrative functions.

Clerical Duties	
Selling tickets for school functions	Office support staff, volunteers should do this task.
Collecting and mailing out progress reports and deficiency notices	Office staff can do this task, or an individual trained in confidentiality can be hired on a temporary basis.
Maintaining permanent records	Office support staff should handle these functions.
Monitoring attendance	Administrators or office support staff could do this task.
Calculating grade point averages (GPAs), class ranks, or honor rolls	Office support staff could generate these reports.
Developing and updating the student handbook	This is an administrative function that the administrator should perform.
Developing and updating course guides	Department chairpersons, subject area faculty and administrators have the responsibility for developing course descriptions and course guides.
Making copies and printing students' schedules	This can be done by clerical/secretarial staff or the school registrar.

Assigned Special Programs & Services Responsibilities	
Sponsoring class clubs and special programs	Sponsorship of these activities should be done by volunteers.
Coordinating and administering the school testing program, which includes individual testing	<p>Administrators should coordinate and administer the school testing program.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Retired teachers could be hired to assist with testing. • A committee of school personnel could collaborate to accomplish the coordination and administration of the school-testing program. • School psychologists and school psychological examiners are the professionals who are qualified to do individual testing.
Completing and managing Individual Education Plans (IEPs) and meeting other special education requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Special Education staff should function as case managers for students with special needs. • School psychologists and school psychological examiners should be responsible for the diagnostic aspects of the IEP. • Special Education case managers should coordinate or chair the staffing, conferences, or IEP meetings.
Completing and managing 504 Plans	Administrators, school nurses, special education teachers and school counselors can all function as the case manager for 504 plans depending on the needs of the students. Only administrators should coordinate the 504 plans because of their authority to assign school/district funding, facilities and/or personnel which may be required in the interventions.

Evaluating: An Ongoing Process

“Demonstrating accountability through the measured effectiveness of the delivery of the comprehensive school counseling program and the performance of the school counseling staff helps ensure that students, parents/guardians, teachers, administrators, and the general public will continue to benefit from quality comprehensive school counseling programs” (Gysbers & Henderson, 2011). To achieve accountability, evaluation is needed concerning program, personnel, and results.



Program Evaluation

School counseling program evaluation asks two questions. First, is there a written school counseling program in the school district? Second, is the written school counseling program the actual implemented program in the buildings of the district? Discrepancies between the written program and the implemented program, if present, come into sharp focus as the program evaluation process unfolds.

To conduct program evaluation, program standards are required. Program standards are acknowledged measures of comparison, or the criteria used to judge the adequacy of the nature and structure of the program as well as the degrees to which the program is in place. In Missouri, program evaluation is conducted using the standards that are found in the Missouri School Improvement Program.

The Internal Improvement Review (IIR) Plan document uses these standards to determine the degree of program implementation. Its purpose is to provide a process for continued updating and improvement as a school district moves toward full implementation and enhancement of a comprehensive school counseling program.

Personnel Evaluation

School counselors should always be evaluated using an evaluation process that is expressly for school counselors and reflects the scope and practice of their work. The evaluation process should be relevant to the school counselor so their professional growth and development will be enhanced by the evaluation. They should not be evaluated using a teacher evaluation instrument.

Personnel evaluation begins with the organizational structure and activities of the district's comprehensive school counseling program. School counseling program personnel evaluation is based directly on the school counselor job description and should have two parts: formative (on-going) and summative (end) evaluations. The School Counselor Growth Plan identifies the performance areas to be supervised and evaluated in observable and measurable terms. The usefulness of this type of evaluation goes beyond judging past performance. It focuses on actual performance/accomplishments during the evaluation period. Because it is improvement oriented, it targets future directions and goals.

Results Evaluation

The results evaluation process begins by developing a plan showing evidence of impact based on the mission and goals of your school district and your district's comprehensive school improvement plan using process, perceptual, and outcomes data. This information will help you identify student outcomes that are priorities for the district. It is important to focus on goals such as improving student academic achievement, creating safe building environments free from disruptive behavior, and ensuring that students are college and career ready upon graduation. Specific student outcomes within these goals can be identified as a result of student participation in school counseling activities and services, and these outcomes provide evidence of impact. A formalized, collaborative process for using student growth data for evidence of impact may consist of Student Learning Objectives (SLO). SLOs are a measurable, long-term goal of academic, social/emotional, or career development growth that represents a portion of a school counselor's impact on student learning. SLOs represent the process of gathering and analyzing student data, using that data to set student growth goals, and then assessing whether students have met those goals at the end of instruction.

Three Types of Data

Three types of data should be collected to show evidence of impact: **process data, perceptual data, and outcome data**. All three types of data are important in determining the overall effectiveness of the school counseling program and in providing direction for program enhancement. It is important to note that evaluation is designed to improve what school counselors and comprehensive school counseling programs are doing, as well as demonstrate the effectiveness of the program on student outcomes. Gathering useful data and using it in meaningful ways can strengthen the impact that a comprehensive school counseling program has on important student performance indicators.

Process Data

Answers the question, “What did you do for whom?” and provides evidence that an activity or program was conducted. Process data is an indication that the program is in place and is operating. It provides administrators and school counselors information on the extent that the school counseling program is reaching all students and their parents.

Examples of evidence include:

- # of individual counseling sessions held
- # of classroom activities conducted and the number of students impacted
- # of parent meetings held and the number of parents in attendance
- # of students with an Individual Academic and Career Plan

Perceptual Data

Answers the question, “What do students or parents believe they know or believe they can do?” These types of data give insight into how an activity or program is perceived by the target audience. Perceptual data indicates the perceived effectiveness of the program.

Examples might include:

- Planning Survey Data
- Other Survey Data (i.e. “80% of freshman students indicate they understand graduation requirements.”)

Outcome Data

Answers the question, “What impact did the activity or programs have on student performance?” These types of data demonstrate the students’ progress toward a target goal that includes achievement, attendance and/or discipline/behavior changes.

Outcome data might include:

- Grades
- Attendance
- Discipline referral
- Graduation rates
- Dropout rates

Impact Over Time

In designing a plan it is also important to consider process, perceptual, and outcome data at different time periods including immediate, intermediate, and long-term.

Immediate Results	Obtained directly after a school counseling activity or a service has been provided. It focuses on determining the results of activities or services as soon as they have occurred.
Intermediate Results	<p>Obtained a period of time after school counseling activities or services have been provided such as at the end of a quarter, semester, or school year. The focus is on determining the impact of school counseling activities or services over a period of time. These types of results should be tied to the district mission statement and the Comprehensive School Improvement Plan and include such things as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Documenting the extent that students, parents/guardians, and teachers used the program and their satisfaction with the program▪ Creating a safe building environment free from disruptive behavior and violence▪ Having students take more rigorous coursework that will lead to increased student achievement▪ Preparing all students to continue their education or enter the workforce after graduation
Long-term Results	<p>Gathered after an extended period of time and focused on the impact of school counseling activities or services over the long-term. Usually this is accomplished by conducting follow-up studies. Items in a follow-up survey might address issues such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Satisfaction with the school counseling program▪ Satisfaction with school experience▪ Satisfaction with preparation for postsecondary education or career conditions▪ Consistency of educational and career choices▪ Progress in their chosen occupational field▪ Postsecondary placement and graduation rates▪ Satisfaction in postsecondary education

Conducting a Results Evaluation

The following “IDEAS!” results evaluation model (Lapan, 2005) can be used to conduct a results evaluation. The “IDEAS!” evaluation model consists of the following steps:

1	Identify	Identify a critical aspect of your job that is important for you to know. Pick something that you have some control over and link up with one or more colleagues to work with (counselor, teacher, administrator, advisory board members, etc.). This is your research team.
2	Describe	Describe the situation thoroughly. Every evaluation activity carried out by the school counselor will have 4 components (The “SIMS” - Students, Interventions, Measurements and Settings).
3	Existing Data	Existing Data—Use existing data that your school is already collecting to show student growth and development. Data collection should not become an additional counselor duty. School districts collect a large amount of data that school counselors can use to develop a results-based evaluation plan.
4	Analyze	Analyze the data by using summary statistics. These summary statistics include: mean, standard deviation, percentage, correlation, and T-test.
5	Summarize	Summarize findings in a brief, written report or presentation. Be clear, concise, and use charts and graphs where appropriate. Be sure to include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A statement of the problem • What you did in response to this problem (intervention) • What you found out • How results data will be used to improve the intervention
6	Utilize	Utilize the data to improve the program and communicate to stakeholders about how your comprehensive school counseling program is making a positive difference in the lives of students in your school.

Enhancing

The enhancing phase uses the data gathered from program, personnel, and results evaluations to redesign and enhance the comprehensive school counseling program. Evaluation data regarding the effectiveness of the district's comprehensive school counseling program, its personnel, and its results provide a basis for sound decision making and should be analyzed to determine what changes are necessary to improve the comprehensive school counseling program.

Based on data results, adjustments to program practices may be necessary. The following are guiding questions which can help determine internal changes supported by data supports. The structural framework that defines the comprehensive school counseling program does not change.

Data Informed Internal Change Analysis	
School Counselor Time Allocation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How closely does Time on Task data match state recommendations? • Is there a logical reason for a specific area to be significantly over or under recommendations? • Is this a one-time situation or is it programmatic? • If it is programmatic, what area(s) will lose time to compensate for the added time elsewhere? • How does this fit with program priorities?
Student Knowledge & Skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have the needs of the student population changed? • Does the curriculum need to be updated to reflect the changes in student population needs? • Does the planning survey support these changes?
Professional Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is enough time being devoted to continuing professional development? • Are school counselor knowledge and skills current with changes in the field? • Is the program current with changes in the field? • Is there enough support and/or resources available for school counselor professional development?
Program Advocacy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What do evaluation data indicate regarding stakeholder understanding of the school counseling program? Which areas need to be strengthened? • Are all opportunities to advocate utilized?
Implementation Level	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is the program fully implemented? If not, what are the barriers according to the data? • What do the data indicate about current student to school counselor ratios v. the state recommended ratios? What are the barriers to improving student to counselor ratios? • What does the data imply about non-school counseling tasks? Is there a need for additional support for the school counseling program (e.g., clerical support)? What are the barriers to increasing support?

The enhancing phase involves making internal changes, such as program content, activities, and time allocations that are tailored specifically to evolving and changing local student, school, and community needs and resources. Changes made during the enhancing phase are based on conclusions drawn from evaluation data and observations drawn from experience with the district's comprehensive school counseling program over time. Changes in the makeup of the district and the economic base of the community may also affect the process. Most importantly, the organizational framework of the program does not change. The organizational framework provides the common language and consistent structure that enable students, parents, teachers, administrators, school board members and school counselors in a school district to speak with a common voice when they refer to their school's comprehensive school counseling program. It is important to remember that annual reports to the Board of Education are required to fully inform them of progress, results and any changes planned for the district's comprehensive school counseling program.

SECTION IV

Students with Disabilities

A school district's comprehensive school counseling program is intended to meet the needs of all students, including students with disabilities as identified by the Missouri's State Plan for Special Education, as well as students with disabilities as identified by Section 504 of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). It is incumbent upon the school counselor to adapt as needed the activities and services provided in the comprehensive school counseling program to meet the needs of all students, including those with Individual Educational Plans (IEPs). Examples of adaptations may include activities such as serving on the IEP team for special needs students who are on a school counselor's caseload as part of the individual planning process or adapting and implementing school counseling lessons to self-contained classrooms in collaboration and partnership with the special needs teachers.

The School Counselor's Role in IEPs:

- School counselors do not function as case managers for students with special needs.
- School counselors may be members of the team involved in the diagnostic aspects of the IEP.
- School counselors are not responsible for the development, implementation, and monitoring of the IEP.
- School counselors take part when appropriate, but should not coordinate or chair staffings, conferences, or IEP meetings.
- School Counselors should not be written into an IEP for ongoing counseling services for specific students as this would limit their ability to provide services for all students.

SECTION V

Professional Development

School counselors have many opportunities to participate in high quality professional development activities to strengthen their knowledge and skills in order to plan, implement, evaluate, and enhance comprehensive school counseling programs in their districts. DESE school counseling, regional and state Missouri School Counselor Association (MSCA), American School Counselor Association (ASCA), Association for Career and Technical Education (ACTE), Missouri ACTE, National Association for College Admission Counseling (NACAC), Missouri Association for College Admission Counseling (MoACAC), ACT, The College Board, colleges and universities, and other organizations provide a variety of professional development opportunities for school counselors.

Mentoring

Through a partnership with DESE and MSCA, a state-wide mentoring program utilizing a Professional Learning Community (PLC) format has been established. Mentoring is a two-year program, where an experienced school counselor is assigned to a PLC to assist that school counselor in implementing the school counseling program. DESE and MSCA work together to identify new school counselors each year. Additional information regarding the state-wide mentoring program can be found on the DESE website or by calling the DESE School Counseling Department.

DESE Sponsored Workshops

The New School Counselor Institute (NSCI) prepares novice counselors for their first day, week and month of school with an eye toward a successful first year.

DESE's School Counseling Department periodically holds regional training opportunities and webinars for school counselors as new initiatives and refinements to the school counseling program warrant. These professional development opportunities, as well as others, can be found on the DESE website.

SECTION VI

Integrated Services

There is a great need for coordinating support services in our schools today. The ultimate goal of school support service providers is to improve the conditions for learning. Providing both prevention and intervention services promotes effective teaching and learning while collaborating with teachers and school staff to ensure that students receive high quality instruction.

Each school must define its unique organizational design based on local context, budget, personnel, and skill sets. Clearly defined roles and job definitions are vital in developing common understanding, in working effectively together, and in educating others. These roles are not interchangeable, as there are unique capabilities and responsibilities of each group, as well as shared duties and responsibilities that are common to all three groups listed below.

School Counselors are responsible to fully implement the school's comprehensive school counseling program addressing the social/emotional, academic, and career development of all students through the delivery of the School Counseling Curriculum, Individual Student Planning, Responsive Services and System Support activities. They are the initial contact for mental health services, providing short-term, solution-focused individual and group counseling within their scope of practice and expertise. School counselors implement curriculum (prevention) to all students and provide responsive services to students in crisis (intervention). They help identify resources for students and their families, as well as serve as a contact for other mental health professionals such as social workers, school psychologists and school based mental health providers or other services outside the school.

School Psychologists work with students with advanced educational and psychological challenges. School psychologists focus on assessment, diagnosis, and treatment plans for more complex situations covering the entire spectrum of emotional, functional, and learning barriers. Serving as consultants for educators and parents while supporting high needs students, these providers are a critical source of technical information and guidance for school personnel. School psychologists typically serve as consultants for multiple schools.

School Social Workers are an increasingly common and critical component to student support services. School social workers fill a unique niche in the school setting as they conduct psycho-social evaluations and provide mental health services for a targeted number of students with more notable emotional and behavioral barriers to learning. School social workers work with students, parents and educators providing consultation and interventions concerning home, school and community factors to improve students' school functioning.

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